

By McDONNELL BODKIN

# tates Soldier

THE MAN FROM VOLT & BRIGHT WAS STANDING OVER HIM.

"I suppose I learned to keep my head out of the way."

"No one but yourself had any reason to go to the safe?" he asked, after a long pause.

"No one," she answered, and he went down the stairs.

"Well, Mr. Beck?" her grace demanded. Impatiently, when he finally closed the head and closed his lamp with a snap.

"Well, my lady, I have learned all I can from the old man. He is very interesting, but it is confidential for the present."

"He has no more to say to you, nor you to the safe"—this with a little touch of petulance in her pleasant voice.

"If you will have lunch with him in the library. You will excuse me?" My lady smiled faintly, and then she took the night mail, and I must look after him."

"Why I ask, Mr. Beck, if you have found any clue?" said the duke, a little anxiously, trifling with his plate while he waited for an excellent play with his knife and fork.

"There are always too many clues, and the trouble is to disentangle them."

"Would it be fair to ask at this stage of the case if the thief is a woman?"

"Never had such a thing in my life, your grace. I go by facts. If you have any facts, I will go by the facts to fit it, and facts won't be forced. There is not any science in detective work."

"You grope about here and there, turn back when you hit your head against a stone wall, and then you are bawling till you lay your hands on the man you want—or the woman?"

"I don't know," said the duke. "You have rather a poor opinion of your profession. How long can you stay?"

"I must leave by the night mail for London. It is well to throw the thief out of the window, but I must have some business there that won't wait."

"Exquisite taste." Old engravers, plain and colored, and old massive mahogany furniture, polished and black and upholstered in flowered plush, was on the thickly carpeted floor.

"There's nothing like electricity," said the duke, as he switched on his little lamp and slipped it back into his pocket. "There's a fellow coming to fit up my rooms with electric light."

"From Volt & Bright?" inquired Mr. Beck.

"The same—do you know them?"

"A little. They are said to be the best in the world, and to make the most modern appliances. You see, in my trade we have to dabble a little in almost everything."

"Burglars, the high-class ones, at least—have begun to study electricity, and to make use of it?"

"Will you have brandy? I've a rare brand of Irish whiskey if you prefer it."

"No, thank you. I'll have a cigar, and a choice Havana cigar, and a black in a deep easy chair, giving me a rest, the very picture of genial simplicity."

"The duke is coming up to town, and he will be here to-morrow, and will stay in town."

"He will be here the day after tomorrow, and the duchess with him."

"You have got to be sure you have got on the track of the opal."

"Do they stay long in London?"

"They will be here, if they put up at the Victoria Hotel, but they have promised to come over to lunch with me to-morrow."

"You are fitted up in time. Her grace has quite a promise for it. Wants the duke to get a new suit of clothes."

"Promised to send a man over to demonstrate; it may mean a big order for goods."

"The duke and the duchess will be here while they are here. I'm sure they would both be glad to have a word with you."

"If I can manage it I will, but I shall be very busy, so don't expect me."

"I'll be in the afternoon, and I'll buy one glass more. Well, have a cigar to go."

[illegible]

of them sought out by experts. Their member of the American Army over

A TYPICAL POST OFFICE ROOM WHERE PARCELS ADDRESSED TO OUR ARMED AND FREQUENTLY RETAKEN

was produced, the name John Doe was pointed out, also the "Co. X, - infantry," which followed below, and the "United States Army," and "can Expeditionary Forces." John Doe, if appeared, was a sort of in-the-flesh personification of the address, and trusting girl graduates wrote to Richard Fielding or Sam Brown or some other fellow boy and candidate and signed said letter or package to kind John Doe, Co. X, Infantry, regardless of Richard or Sam or John's particular infantry, cavalry or what not.

"The original government announcements," said Mr. Praeger in an announcement made November 27 last, "refusing to forward letters that are addressed to soldiers in the line with the armed forces is the cause of

mail from this country to soldiers in France, the American Post Office Department will shortly be compelled to take steps to get the mail to the soldiers all such pieces of mail.

Then, too, the railroad transportation of mail is not sufficient to meet military needs. Many persons who have complained to the War Office department that they have visited that the mail is reaching the soldiers from them is addressed in a satisfactory manner. The original complaints were due to not allowing soldiers to send their letters to get to the front, and the answer was to send the mail to the front.

In England mail for Americans is transmitted to the front by the American Red Cross, the Post Office Department to the



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## A FRENCH WAR STORY

By Charles Henry Hirsch

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shadowy curtain of space, he murmurs softly, so that they blend with the muffled music, these two strange verses of de Villiers de Palé-Adam—

"C'est la femme qu'on aime a cause de la nuit."

Et ceux qui l'ont connue en parlent de la muse," she says, with a sort of coquettish modesty.

He got up and embraced her.

"Let us make more light," she begins.

"It is like a sepulcher here."

The electric lights having been turned on, it is the real Laura d'Algerius.

**EXPEDITIONARY FORCES ARE EX-**

peditionary forces are expected to him.

the mail to the proper military authorities for delivery to the addressee. Mail for Americans who may be serving in English, Canadian or French armies is dispatched as foreign mail to the postal service of the foreign government which such American soldiers identified, and the delivery of such mail is effected by such government."

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Navy mail clerks, during the Christmas rush, when so many thousand packages were being sent abroad, complained not infrequently to the postmaster general that parcel post packages containing perishable material exposed to actual frost.

"Why don't you go on? It was very beautiful."

"He didn't know yet, despite the words, whether the smile of the eyes and the mouth are real. She advances a step, and she hears a low, almost measured voice, which he adores equally with the caresses, the perfume and the ardor with which constitute her love."

"Isn't there something of me, George, in that woman? Won't you repeat those words to me, so that I can hear them. The music accompanies them, almost unwittingly on the part of the Carrouge, and he repeats over the keyboard."

"It was necessary for his visitor to kiss him on the temple in order to draw him out of his reverie, and she warmly welcomes her and expresses his astonishment at her mysterious entrance."

"I don't doubt that she is deceiving me," said I, feeling that I might have been deceived."

"You shall know. I am going to tell you everything. Why shouldn't I? My avowal is less frightful than the thing itself. I love you. Don't judge me as I judge you. I will tell you the same. I have confessed that our love—"

"Speak, Laura! What is it you would tell me?"

"I am a spy—and trapped—"

"You!"

"Yes. They are going to take me away. And I am not ready to say anything without having you know that our love is above these abominations—"

"You are right!"

"You! A spy? You?"

"George, in order to have my own of pure happiness I took chances. I could have been arrested."

"Go!"

"Suppose they are waiting for me."

(Continued on Fifth Page.)